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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/018,487	12/19/2001	Stefan Remke	MERCK 2347	7988
23599	7590	04/23/2004	EXAMINER	
MILLEN, WHITE, ZELANO & BRANIGAN, P.C. 2200 CLARENDON BLVD. SUITE 1400 ARLINGTON, VA 22201			HWU, DAVIS D	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		3752		

DATE MAILED: 04/23/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/018,487	REMKE ET AL.
Examiner	Art Unit	
Davis Hwu	3752	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 March 2004.
- 2a) This action is FINAL.                    2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-11 and 13-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) 9-11,13-16 and 19 is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-8,17 and 18 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) All b) Some \* c) None of:  
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.  
a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

### Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_

- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

***Response to Amendment***

1. Applicant's amendment of March 29, 2004 is acknowledged and entered.
2. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

3. Claims 1-7, 17, 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.
4. Regarding claims 1 and 17, the phrase "optionally" renders the claim indefinite because it is unclear whether the limitation(s) following the phrase are part of the claimed invention. Applicant is required to properly claim the limitation or delete it from the claims. Claims 1 and 17 have not been further examined on their merits.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

5. Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Narumiya.

The patent to Narumiya discloses a gas permeable thermal insulator comprising a porous material which is heat-resistant up to 1200 degrees C and has a pore diameter of from 1 to 5 micrometers (Column 10 and Tables 1 and 2). Narumiya does not disclose a reaction tube, however, it has been held that a recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus satisfying the claimed structural limitations. Since the material disclosed by Narumiya comprises the temperature and

pore diameters as recited, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that the material of Narumiya could be used to make a reaction tube as claimed by the instant invention.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

6. Claims 9-11, 13-16 and 19 are allowed.

***Response to Arguments***

7. Applicant has not addressed the 35 USC 112 issue presented in the previous office action. The claim must recite actual limitations and not optional limitations. The claim must recite only one of "at the height of the atomization system" and "distributed over the length of the plant" and not one or the other which makes the claim indefinite and is improper. Also, the "gas inlet slots or nozzles" and "in the form of a gas burner" must be properly claimed or these limitations must be deleted from the claim. The optional limitations should be written as dependent claims if Applicant wants to properly claim the limitations. Regarding claim 8, since the prior art discloses a material comprising the claimed limitations, the material of the prior art can be used to make a reaction tube.

***Conclusion***

8. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the

shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Davis Hwu whose telephone number is 703-305-1663. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Y. Mar can be reached on (703)308-2087. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703)872-9302.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)308-0861.



Davis Hwu